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ABSTRACT

This report was prepared by a special task force of the National Association of Secondary School Principals to aid professional educators and community groups who may wish to consider possible changes in high school graduation requirements. The report discusses a number of issues surrounding graduation and offers some specific recommendations concerning graduation requirements. Separate brief sections of the report examine current trends in graduation requirements, the meaning of the diploma, verification of requirements, requirements for the diploma, alternative approaches to the diploma, and articulation with postsecondary education. The appendix contains a table that summarizes 1974 graduation requirements for all 50 states. (JG)

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Graduation Requirements

EA 007 439

NASSP Special Task Force Report

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Task Force
on
Graduation Requirements

Ocie A. Anderson, Principal, Blackwell High School, Oklahoma

J. Douglas Conner, Executive Secretary, American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers

E. Alden Dunham, Executive Associate, Carnegie Corporation of New York

Howard R. Kimball, Consultant, New Hampshire State Department of Education

Dorothy Magett, Principal, Boltwood School, Evanston Township High School, Illinois

Kent C. Myers, Assistant Superintendent, Lake Oswego School District No. 7, Oregon

Scott D. Thomson, Associate Secretary for Research, NASSP, *Chairman*

Graduation Requirements

Prepared by a Special Task Force
of
The National Association of Secondary School Principals
Reston, Virginia

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Foreword

During recent decades every attempt has been made to move the high school diploma within the reach of all youth. In the process, however, the promotion of students has become almost routine. As a consequence, questions now are being raised about the meaning and worth of the diploma.

Hoping to learn the status of graduation requirements throughout the country, the Board of Directors of NASSP appointed a task force to prepare a report on the subject. Composed of seven members, the task force began work in August 1974 and completed the study in June 1975.

Currently, graduation requirements appear to be in flux. Several states recently have modified graduation requirements to include specific performance criteria. Other states and numerous local school districts are reviewing their graduation requirements with an eye toward possible revision. At the same time alternative paths to the diploma are being explored. Indeed, some careful thinking is taking place today about the high school diploma and its place in secondary education.

NASSP recently published a position paper on secondary education entitled *This We Believe*. The recommendations in that paper concerning diploma requirements are similar, of course, to the requirements listed here. The two publications are not identical, however, as each was developed by a separate task force. For instance, the discussion of graduation requirements is more extensive in this publication, and this task force specifically recommends the use of certificates of competency to supplement the diploma.

This report on graduation requirements discusses a number of issues surrounding graduation, including articulation,

verification, alternative programs, and the social context. It also offers some specific recommendations concerning graduation requirements. The report should prove useful to professional and community groups as they study the meaning and certification of graduation.

The Association expresses its appreciation to task force members for developing this timely and useful report.

Owen B. Kiernan
Executive Secretary
NASSP

Introduction

A great diversity exists among the 50 states in their high school graduation requirements. Some states legislate specific courses, including English, U.S. history, government, mathematics, physical education, consumer education, driver education, and health as requisites for the diploma. In other states, local school districts determine the qualifications for graduation, including all course requirements. Typically, some requirements are mandated by the state legislature and some by the local school board.

Since education developed in America as a state rather than a national function, differences in graduation requirements could be expected. Local circumstances rather than national policy have tended to dictate graduation requirements. Consequently, not only does the nature of mandated courses vary, but the number of credits necessary to qualify for a diploma varies, as well, across the country.

Public interest in high school graduation requirements in recent years has been growing. This interest is one expression of society's broad review of education. It comes also as a result of family mobility and the growing awareness that a diploma has no common meaning among the states. Consequently, serious questions are being asked about graduation requirements. What do they signify? Should they be consistent? Are new criteria appropriate?

As this process of analysis and review takes place, the significance of graduation requirements begins to come into focus. They are of pivotal importance. Coming at the close of secondary school, graduation requirements shape the outcomes of schooling. They reflect the kernel of public expectations for schools.

New Times and New Trends

Many states, responding to the challenge of an inquisitive public, are modifying their graduation requirements. Among the forces acting to bring about this review and revision are these:

1. *New legal prerogatives for youth.* These prerogatives include a determination of the age of majority as 18 years, extension of the constitutional rights of minors, and reduction of the age required for the voting franchise.

2. *New maturational circumstances.* The menarche continues to move forward one-fifth of a year for each decade, or about one full year for every two and a half generations. Adolescence is likely to begin today at age 11 for girls rather than at age 13, and at age 12 for boys rather than at age 14.

3. *New social conditions.* Many youth today are granted social privileges at an early age. Family influence and control appear to be diminishing. Most youth in late adolescence (ages 16 through 19) appear to share common characteristics. They are mature in their mental processes but have yet to achieve an organized ego or a specific life plan. They seek real but tentative engagements in the adult world; they want to test themselves in society.

4. *New job interests.* About three-fourths of all youth at age 17 work either part-time or full-time. Most youth believe that school credit should be given for supervised service and work in the community.

5. *New school-college relationships.* Many institutions of higher education are revising their entrance requirements to make them more flexible. In addition, early admissions programs for qualified students are increasing. Opportunities for students to receive college instruction for college credit while still in high school are beginning to unfold as well. Deferred admission plans are developing for students who desire to "stop out" between secondary school and higher education.

6. *New attitudes about education.* Interest in apprenticeships and other approaches to practical learning is developing. Education is becoming more broadly defined rather than being considered synonymous with "schooling." Alternative approaches to the diploma are being explored, and

an interest in combining or alternating study at school with work and service in the community is growing.

Society is also taking a second look at the basic purpose of secondary education. Most states have developed statements of educational goals to assist the public to determine the content and emphasis of education. While useful, these documents tend to focus upon general purposes rather than upon specific objectives; they provide broad rather than detailed guidelines for graduation requirements.

Goal statements may not resolve some of the countering forces at work in education, including the desire for a humanistic and tolerant approach to schooling on the one hand and the demand for strict and detailed accountability on the other. A better appreciation of the position of citizens on such issues can be gained by community development of specific objectives for secondary schools. It is an essential step in determining graduation requirements that will gain broad public support.

Among the many states actively reviewing and revising graduation requirements two trends are evident. These include:

- An extension of local options to determine graduation requirements while concurrently reducing state requirements.
- The use of performance standards as a requirement of the diploma.

Recently revised graduation requirements in California, for instance, liberalize the options for local school districts. Rather than mandating a specific list of courses for graduation, California has moved toward requiring that instruction be *available* to students in most subject areas, including English, social sciences, foreign languages, science, mathematics, fine arts, applied arts, vocational-technical studies, physical education, and driver education. The actual requirements for graduation are largely a local mandate. The state does require generally that graduating students possess adequate work skills and that they receive instruction in values, morals, citizenship, humaneness, safety, and the effects of alcohol and drugs.[1]

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[1] See the Appendix for a summary of the graduation requirements in the 50 states.

New specifications for the high school diploma in Florida allow for some alternative approaches to graduation. Among these are a program of job entry for students at age 16 or older who have earned a minimum of 10 credits and have completed two years of high school. The special requirements of this route include a cooperative agreement among parent, teacher, and employer as well as a demonstrated job proficiency. In Florida students also may graduate under a plan of "student performance" developed by each local district.

Credit toward the high school diploma may be earned by examination in a number of states, including Illinois, Kansas, Pennsylvania, and Minnesota. The determination of courses for which examination credit may be given is largely a local matter.

The second trend, application of performance criteria, is most apparent in Oregon and California. Oregon has established a requirement for "demonstrated performance" in 20 areas of personal, social, and career development as a qualification for the high school diploma. The criteria used to determine competency and the evaluation of the competency level attained are left to each district. Recommended state guidelines are available as a reference.

In addition, 21 course units are required for graduation in Oregon. The state has mandated instruction in consumer education, career education, and citizenship education as well as in the traditional disciplines of communications, mathematics, science, social science, and health and physical education. The Oregon plan for graduation developed after market research identified a public concern about educational quality. Oregonians felt that students were receiving an insufficient education and that the diploma had lost its credibility.

The Meaning of the Diploma

With the earlier maturation and increasing independence of youth, with school-college relations in flux, with course requirements becoming flexible, and with traditional approaches to granting credit under review, it may appear that the high school diploma is obsolete. Or perhaps it is misposi-

tioned and needs to be moved forward in the sequence of education. Perhaps it is a meaningless certificate of attendance and should be abolished. Or perhaps it should be redefined and reinstated as a document of significance.

Society will likely retain some ceremony or certificate to document the passage of youth to adult status. Observation suggests such an event to be far too important to pass unnoticed in human culture, primitive or sophisticated.

The high school graduation ceremony serves a number of functions in American society. A diploma provides some assurance to the state that a new generation is equipped to assume the responsibilities of citizenship. While the diploma gives parents and friends a sense of pride and progress, it also furnishes employers and college officials with an indication of maturity and achievement. It renews the commitment of teachers and administrators, and, for youth, it represents not only a feeling of accomplishment but also opens the final and sacred door to adulthood.

Graduation is one of the more significant ceremonies in American society. The diploma, as a symbol, carries cultural as well as economic values. It provides solid evidence of this society's commitment to the development of the individual.

But what should be the intrinsic meaning of the diploma? What should it signify about courses and competencies? What mastery of skills and knowledge should it represent?

The task force believes that the criteria for a high school diploma should be distinctive, representing an accomplishment independent of other factors. A diploma should stand alone on its own merits, but should not necessarily mean that the holder is prepared for a job. Nor should it particularly signify that the holder is ready for college. Rather, the diploma should certify that the graduate possesses the baseline skills and knowledge essential to an effective adult citizenship.

An effective adult citizen assumes some degree of self-sufficiency. The diploma, therefore, should signify that the holder possesses the skills to learn on his own. The graduate is a person capable of acquiring the information necessary to be a citizen and a worker. Educationally he is independent. He possesses a set of basic skills which enable life to be pursued in an informed and productive manner.

Graduates should be competent in the basic skills at a level sufficient to learn job specifications or to pursue the requirements of postsecondary education. Graduates, having acquired the skills to learn independently, thus may direct themselves as interests and circumstances dictate. They will have reached the "takeoff point" in education, casting off their dependency and allowing for some personal choice in the years ahead.

The graduate should also be sufficiently knowledgeable about democratic governance and group settings to be capable of functioning in the larger society. The enabling skills which allow a person to function in society are social as well as cognitive.

The diploma requirements, therefore, should include these verified attributes of graduates:

1. an ability to read, write, and compute with specified proficiency,
2. an acquaintanceship with the American experience, including an understanding of the process and structure of democratic governance,
3. the successful completion of a series of courses and/or planned experiences, some of which involve a group setting.

A generally accepted meaning for the diploma, based upon these three central criteria, should be developed. The diploma must become common currency. When this occurs, the value of the diploma will rise because citizens will better understand its requirements and its purpose. The minimum requirements for the diploma must have a degree of constancy within each state, so that it has meaning and worth.

Verification of Requirements

The aim of secondary education is to nourish the unique talent of each individual while at the same time developing in students common attitudes and competencies at a level sufficient for society to function. Some of the common knowledge required is academic while other of this knowledge is attitudinal.

Many skills can be measured by tests of competency. Complex behaviors, however, are more difficult to gauge. The determination of what is taught and the measurement of what is learned is still an indefinite science in the affective realm. The documentation of planned experience, therefore, remains a useful measure.

Indicators of performance can strengthen the evaluation process but they are insufficient by themselves as criteria. They need to be paired with verification of significant experience to document a comprehensive approach to education. Among experiences important to learning is the opportunity to study and work in a group environment. The give and take of discussion, the response of others to one's actions, the completion of common tasks, the assumption of responsibility for others, and participation in a collective enterprise all contribute significantly to a social and intellectual preparedness for adulthood.

The world into which youth graduate, that of employers and of institutions of higher education, is not looking for cognitive and psychomotor proficiency alone. This world is also seeking social qualities such as maturity, dependability, and the ability to work constructively in a group setting. The realms of experience and achievement, then, are important to the value of the high school diploma. The graduate should possess enabling skills that are social as well as personal.

The socialization dimension of education and the experiential dimension of learning necessitate the use of units as well as competencies for credit verification. Passing a written examination on the French horn cannot be equated with playing in a concert band. A solo reading of *Macbeth* does not balance participation in a production of *Macbeth*. Knowledge of line and form and color does not match the experience of painting a picture. And, to project beyond the classroom, the possession of occupational skills does not assure that a person can perform successfully on the job.

While some products of experience can be measured in the classroom, the totality of the experience cannot be measured so easily. It can only be recorded. Many persons capable of passing an examination on sailing or mountain climbing would be in trouble if their knowledge were tested by nature. Documentation of a field experience, in this instance, might prove to be a more reliable measure than other forms of

examination. And so with many courses and programs in the curriculum. The benefit of experience must be maintained as a part of education. The diploma must reflect more than academic competency; it should encompass the personal growth and development of the student. The experiential side of learning should be one important dimension of the diploma.

The skills and experiences required for the diploma must be verified by reasonable means. The traditional credit system has the advantage of flexibility, course by course, as well as ease of documentation. Educationally, it accommodates well to individual interests. The disadvantage of the credit system centers around the problem of inconsistent standards. Quality may bear little relationship from school to school.

A second approach to verification, that of competency measures, allows for specific examination of skills. It has the advantage of requiring careful thought about the course objectives and of the competencies to be measured. This approach can bring a new honesty to the diploma. But a system of verification based entirely upon competencies or performance indicators may define performances too narrowly, may not measure complex cognitive behaviors, may overlook affective outcomes and other areas difficult to measure, and may prove restrictive and inflexible in operation.

Taking a series of tests may qualify a student for a certificate of competency in the areas being tested but not for a diploma. A diploma signifies a planned sequence of experiences as well as test performance under specific circumstances.

The task force believes that qualification for the high school diploma, therefore, should include verification by course and by competency. The use of both approaches strengthens the measurement process and adds authenticity to the diploma. Competency measures should be used to evaluate skill proficiency. Credits should be used to document completion of courses and programs. Together they make the evaluation picture complete.

Competency measures in the evaluation process should focus upon fundamental skills necessary to the acquisition of more specific skills by the graduates. The broader the appli-

cation of the skill, the more valuable it will prove to the user. Thus the general, or "G" factor, should be the central criterion applied to determine the inclusion or exclusion of competencies as graduation requirements. The diploma should not be submerged in a sea of specific competencies difficult to apply and burdensome to evaluate. Rather, only generalized competencies should apply.

Assessment of experiential or community-based education should use competencies and credits, or both, to verify learning beyond the classroom. Among procedures used successfully to evaluate experiential education are performance tests, comprehensive written examinations, assessment centers, ratings, interviews, simulations, and product assessment. The technique selected will depend upon the nature and objectives of the experience.[2]

Requirements for the Diploma

The task force, in summary, sees graduation requirements as reflecting specified content and processes, as well as defined approaches to evaluation. The task force believes the criteria for the high school diploma should be as follows:

- As verified by competency measures—
  a. functional literacy in reading, writing, and speaking
  b. ability to compute, including decimals and percentages,
  c. knowledge of the history and culture of the United States, including the concepts and processes of democratic governance.

Functional literacy concerns the performance of tasks representative of adulthood. These tasks include the ability to locate information, summarize paragraphs, interpret maps and tables, follow written instructions, understand basic manuals (i.e., driver's license), and verify written information. The competencies should be demonstrated using mate-

[2] For a discussion of the application of these techniques, see *A Compendium of Assessment Techniques*, Cooperative Assessment of Experiential Learning, Educational Testing Service, Princeton, N.J. 08540.

rials from the areas of: (1) health and safety, (2) work situations, (3) personal business, and (4) citizenship.

Ability to compute includes an application of the appropriate operation to problems as well as an understanding of the computational process itself.

Knowledge of the American experience concerns the central political, economic, and social events of the nation as well as an understanding of the precepts of democracy and its processes in action.

The enabling skills in literacy, computation, and citizenship required for graduation may be verified according to measures and procedures selected by each school district or state. The preferred approach, however, is statewide so that meaning may be restored to the diploma for the citizens of an entire state.

- As verified by units or credits—
  a. successful completion of credits or units equal to a regular student course load extending through the first semester of the senior year,
  b. sufficient attendance in courses and programs to gain fully the educational and social benefits of group situations.

The number of units required for graduation should be sufficient to ensure a thorough education, yet not be so many or inflexible as to preclude early graduation should that be the desire of students and their families. The number of units required should also not be so large as to prevent the graduation with their class of students who have failed one or two courses. Thus, the requirements should be somewhat less than a full and regular student course load carried through the second semester of the senior year.

Units should be granted for community-based as well as school-based programs, assuming appropriate planning and evaluation.

Attendance in educational settings is an important component of learning for youth. Good attendance benefits youth academically as well as socially. Group learning situations assist students to communicate, to work together, to gain perspectives, and to accept responsibility—all important components of adulthood. Since good attendance at work is expected and rewarded in the adult world, a habit of consistency is a beneficial behavior for youth in the long run.

The task force recommends the use of certificates of competency. These certificates should be awarded to all students regardless of whether the diploma requirements are met. All students who leave school, whether by graduation or by stopping out prior to graduation, should receive certificates indicating their specific level of competency in the required areas of reading, writing, mathematics, and American civilization. For some students the certificate would indicate achievement at the college level. For other students the certificate might indicate achievement at the fourth or fifth grade level only.

For the nongraduate, these certificates should be seen as an interim record of progress. By receiving something rather than nothing upon leaving school, the student may be encouraged to return to complete his education. The task force strongly endorses the concept that phasing in and out of formal schooling may be a positive experience for some students, especially if they are encouraged by schools to return and complete requirements for the diploma.

Students who graduate successfully from high school, then, may receive two documents: A diploma and a certificate of competency for the skill areas. Students not qualifying for the diploma would receive only the certificate of competency. An insufficient level of performance or an inadequate participation in the classroom (or in other planned experiences) would leave the student at the end of the senior year with only a certificate of competency.

The task force is persuaded that exceptions cannot be made to these base-line requirements for the diploma. Most graduates, of course, will far exceed these criteria. Other students, those less motivated or talented, will respond admirably when requirements are clearly stated. Still other students will succeed with remedial and tutorial assistance. Slow learners and under-achievers may well receive new and immediate attention with the inauguration of a competency verification system. Perhaps most of all, broad educational opportunities to learn in new ways in the community will intensify learning for some youth and will instruct them better than have classroom settings.

The task force feels that with adequate resources, appropriate professional technique, and reasonable student effort almost all youth will qualify for the diploma. For those who

cannot or do not qualify, the certificates of competency will reward effort and reflect honestly the capabilities of the students in the areas measured.

Alternative Approaches to the Diploma

Alternatives to the regular high school program have always been available on a private basis. Through private music or dance lessons, summer science projects, community theater, family tutors, basketball camps, and similar arrangements, special opportunities for learning have traditionally been provided for some youth. Many of the most talented artists achieved excellence in this manner.

The current move to broaden and to individualize secondary education has brought new public attention to the question of educational alternatives. A strong focus upon individual talent suggests the development of alternatives. Such development would require an opening of educational opportunities beyond those currently available in schools. New approaches, therefore, are suggested for students, both on campus and in the community.

The movement toward alternatives shows promise of improving education for youth. Among the benefits are:

1. Alternatives can be developed which adapt to the individual learning styles of students as well as to their objectives.
2. Alternatives can assist students to avoid failure; they provide a fresh start for students in trouble.
3. Alternatives can reallocate school resources from remediating problems to preventing problems. A diagnosis of student needs and learning styles should precede the enrollment of students in a particular program.

Among the alternative formats for learning available to secondary school students are work experience, volunteer service, special career programs, schools-within-schools, senior options, travel and study, apprenticeships, college courses, early graduation, and satellite schools. These alternatives tend to focus upon experiential education and upon independent projects as contrasted to regular classroom work. It should be noted, in addition, that the new elective

courses developed annually by schools are also alternative paths to learning.

Alternative schools separated from the campus of the main school have tended to be short-lived in most communities. Experience indicates that other plans for alternative education tend to be more successful in the long run.

The development of alternative approaches to the diploma can benefit all concerned. Careful planning of these alternatives is necessary, however. A thoughtful consideration of the ways that alternatives dovetail into the total educational program is important, as well. Among the questions to consider are:

1. Will the students in alternative programs be equipped for additional learning?
2. Is consideration given to human growth and development as well as to career training?
3. Are the basic skills of reading, writing, and computation included?
4. Are the alternatives presented as optional paths rather than as better paths for everyone?
5. Does planning for students carry beyond the immediate experience?
6. Does the learner, together with parents, teachers, and other professionals, plan and discuss the alternative selected?

A consideration of alternative paths will cause the school to focus its attention upon the planning of student programs and the identification of resources to serve those programs. School, for some students, will become a planner and a broker for learning more than merely a dispenser of learning. Schools will place a new emphasis upon helping students to define educational goals, upon assisting students to consider prior learning experiences, and upon diagnosing student strengths and weaknesses. Schools will then guide the student toward learning experiences appropriate to the student's nature and needs. These experiences may be unique to a student or may involve groups of students as they seek alternative paths.

The school must also expand opportunities for students to learn in a community setting. The learning alternatives available to students should be a continuum, moving from full-time involvement on campus to full-time involvement in

a community learning station, depending upon the nature and objectives of the student. The school, rather than providing one or two alternative programs, should move toward the flexibility of these broadened options.

While offering these opportunities for students to learn, they must at the same time be meshed with graduation requirements. Off-campus opportunities, for instance, may meet the requirements for course electives; but they may also assist students to gain the necessary competencies in reading or mathematics. Many youth have improved their reading by tutoring or have learned to compute decimals in a stockroom or warehouse. The immediate need and a practical application can overcome blocks to learning that perhaps were present in the classroom.

The optimum mix of school and community learning stations will depend upon the nature of each student. The determination of this mix is a central professional task that the school must address with deliberate care. The program selection should come from a full reservoir of resources, both community based and school based.

As the school plans and develops alternative paths to the high school diploma, care must be taken to maintain the integrity of the diploma. The development of adequate skills, together with the documentation of appropriate courses and experiences to include those in a group setting, must be required for a diploma earned by an alternative path as well as for a diploma earned by a more traditional approach. Diplomas should be granted only upon evidence that students have developed these skills and experiences.

Articulation with Postsecondary Education

The relationship between secondary and postsecondary education is changing. While high schools and higher education developed in America as relatively separate systems, a new emphasis on cooperation is currently emerging. The marriage is pragmatic as well as philosophical. Secondary school students are seeking expanded opportunities for learning while at the same time postsecondary education is facing a dropping student enrollment.

Past efforts at effective articulation have often proved to be inadequate, causing unnecessary expense to student and society alike. But the long-standing need for an effective continuum of learning is now becoming fulfilled by public demand for a system of lifelong learning free of discontinuity. Sharp breaks in arrangements for formal education are giving way to a fluidity of movement from one educational level to another.

Meanwhile, new degrees of complexity are entering the situation. These include the popularity of part-time study, a growing adult clientele, the diverse nature of pre-collegiate experience, the advent of open admissions, and the growth of proprietary schools. While some 2,900 collegiate institutions served more than nine million students in 1972, an additional 7,000 non-collegiate technical, vocational, business, and correspondence schools served approximately 1.6 million students during that same year.

Clearly, the universe of postsecondary education needs some order. The wide variety of institutional choices for students, together with the desire of students to stop in and stop out of schooling, requires the development of strong cooperative relationships among educational institutions, and between schools and the job market.

The sensible and timely transition of youth from secondary to postsecondary status requires a consideration of some important factors. These include:

- A considerable overlap occurs between the curriculum of the last two years of high school and the first two years of college. Studies indicate that nearly one-third of the subject matter content of the freshman and sophomore year of college is merely a repetition of high school content. This duplication should be trimmed through the cooperative and joint action of secondary schools and colleges.
- A growing number of youth are graduating early from secondary school. Some 60 percent of American high schools in 1974 allowed students to graduate before their class. This suggests the importance of flexibility in college admissions practice.
- College admissions requirements are changing. Many large state universities now limit the courses required

for entrance to English and mathematics. Others practice open admissions entirely.

- A significant number of high school students find the senior year to be monotonous and unchallenging. Broad options should be developed for this grade level to include the opportunity to take one or more college courses on the high school campus.
- Alternative courses and programs are growing in popularity among youth. Credit verification for this approach to learning must be cooperatively developed by schools and postsecondary institutions.
- Growing numbers of youth deficient in the basic skills of reading and writing are appearing in college. A common responsibility suggests the need for a coordination of school-college effort concerning remediation as well as graduation requirements. As a starting point, the high school diploma or equivalency diploma should be required for admission to college.

The task force believes that a number of imaginative programs should be developed by secondary and postsecondary education to assure a smooth flow of students from secondary school to postsecondary status. Distinctions should be eased so that youth may have the option of being secondary school students or postsecondary students, or both, or part-time students of one or the other institutions. To plan and implement this flow, strong school-college liaison councils should be formed to meet on a regular basis. Secondary schools should initiate the formation of these councils.

Among the areas for the councils to consider are student status, joint counseling, admissions criteria, tutorial programs, the curriculum, and the granting of credit. Practices relating to early and deferred admissions and to crediting policies for experiential learning should be clearly defined. Secondary and postsecondary institutions should together allow without penalty reasonable "stopouts" in a student's program.

Joint school-college liaison councils should also inventory the respective educational resources overall within a community to determine the best approach to coordinating and delivering these resources for the continuous benefit of youth.

The task force reiterates its view that youth should enjoy a variety of opportunities to earn college credit while still attending high school. The Advanced Placement Program and College Level Examination Programs (CLEP) offer two routes to college credit, but other options should be available. These include:

1. Instruction on the high school campus by college professors.
2. Appointment of qualified secondary school teachers as adjunct professors to teach college level courses on the high school campus for credit entered on college transcripts.
3. Acceptance of high school students on college campuses for one or more courses. A number of colleges and universities allow high school students to enroll part time.

These options, the task force concludes, should be open to all serious students and not solely to the most talented.

The total educational system should be efficient and effective for youth. Unnecessary duplication and program discontinuity waste precious talents and energy as well as financial resources. A new effort to streamline the system for youth must be a high priority.

These recommendations, carried out in a spirit of good will and cooperation, will move secondary and higher education toward an effective continuity as well as toward economy.

Appendix

SUMMARY OF STATE-MANDATED GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS—1974
(Note: Most state requirements are minimums)

STATE	Units (years) of Study Required for Graduation: English	Soc. St.*	Math	Science	PE, HE	Other	TOTAL	
Alabama	4	3	1	1	4	Electives	7	20
Alaska	3	2.5	3	w/math	1	"	6.5	16
Arizona	3	2	1	1		"	8.5	16
Arkansas	4	1			1	.5=Free Enterprise System 1 major	3	
California	(Shared with local boards of education) [See footnote 1]					3 minor	2 ea.	16
Colorado	none specified							
Connecticut	none specified but graduate must be familiar with U.S. history							18
Delaware	4	3	1	1	1.5			
Florida	2	2[2]	1	1	1	[See footnote 3]	15	18
Georgia	3	3	1[4]	1			[above grade 9]	
Hawaii	4	4	1	1	1.5	Electives Electives	9 6	18 18[5]
Idaho	3	1.5	1	2		Guidance	.5	
Illinois	3	1			1.5	Electives	8-8.5	17
Indiana	3	2	1	1	4	Electives	11	16[6]
Iowa		2			1	Electives	8	16[7]
Kansas	4	2	1	1	4	[See footnote 8]		Open
Kentucky	3	2	2	2	1	Electives	8	17[9]
Louisiana	3	2	2	1	1	Electives	8	18
(2 plans)	2	2	1	1	2	[2 from Eng., SS, Math, or Science]		20
Maine	4	1	(not more than ½ of credits from non-classroom experiences)					16
Maryland	4	3	2	2	1	Electives	6	18
Massachusetts		1						Open
Michigan		.5 (Civics)			1			Open
Minnesota	3	2			1	Electives	9	15
Mississippi	3	2.5	1	1		[See footnote 10]		[10-11-12th yr.]
						Electives	4	16

Missouri	1	1	1	1	1	Fine Arts	1	20
						Practical Arts	1	
						(See footnote 11)		
Montana	4	1.5	2	1	1	(See footnote 12)		16
Nebraska	The only requirement is 120 sem. hrs in grades 10-11-12							Open
Nevada	3	2	1	1	2.5		9.5	19
						(See footnote 13)		
New Hampshire	4	2	1	1		Electives	8	16
New Jersey		2			3-4	(See footnote 14)		Variable
New Mexico	4	2	1	1	1	(See footnote 15)		18
New York	4	3	[16]	1	4.5	3 yr sequence in sci., math., foreign lang., mus., art, bus., ind. art, homemaking, or voc. subjects		16
								{local
North Carolina	4	2	1	2	1	Electives	6	16 {option
								{allowed
North Dakota	4	3	1	2	1	Electives	6	17
						(See footnote 17)		
Ohio	3	2	1	1	1			17
Oklahoma	4	1.5	1	1		(See footnote 18)		18
Oregon	3	1	1	1	2	{Citizenship ed	1	
						{Personal finance	1	21[19]
						{Career ed	1	
						{Electives	10	
Pennsylvania	3	2	1	1	3	0 - Grades 10-11-12		Open[20]
Rhode Island	4	1	1	1	4	Electives	9	16[21]
South Carolina	4	2	2	1	1	Electives	8	18[22]
South Dakota	4	2	1	1	(These are recommendations only)			16
Tennessee	4	1.5	1	1	1.5	Electives	9	18[23]
Texas	3	2.5	2	2	2	Electives	6.5	18
Utah (10-11-12)	3	2	1	1	1.5	Electives	6.5	15[24]
Vermont	4	2	1	1		Electives	8	16[25]
Virginia	5 (grades 8 - 12)	3	2	2	3	Electives	8	23
Washington	3	2.5	1	1	2	Electives	7.5	16
						Occup. Ed.	1	
West Virginia	4	3	1	1	1			17[26]
Wisconsin	none specified							Open
Wyoming		1						18

*One year of U.S. history is required in 45 states.

Summary of State-Mandated Graduation Requirements

Notes:

1. A number of states grant the diploma upon successful completion in an accredited post-secondary institution of the total credits required for high school graduation.
2. Most states do not require 4 years of attendance at a secondary school for the awarding of a diploma.
3. Some states, such as Washington, allow the local school board to waive all requirements other than those actually legislated by state statute. In many states the requirements for graduation exceed the state statutes. They are set by administrative regulation or by state boards.

Footnotes

1. The State of California lists these general requirements for graduation:
   - Adequate skills and preparation for work
   - Instruction in values, morals, citizenship, and humaneness
   - Personal and public safety, to include effects of drugs and alcohol
   - Academic preparation sufficient to graduate not to exclude entering higher education. Courses must be offered in these areas of study: English, social sciences, foreign languages, science, mathematics, fine arts, applied arts, vocational-technical education, physical education and driver education.

   The State expects districts to establish minimum levels of proficiency in basic skills. To graduate, sufficient proficiency must be shown in English, American history, American government, mathematics, science, and physical education. Alternate modes, such as work experience, are encouraged.
2. Only 1 year of social studies required if 3 years of social studies taken during grades 7, 8, 9. The course "Americanism vs. Communism" is required of all graduates.
3. Students may graduate in less than 3 years if accepted to an accredited post-secondary institution. A minimum of 10 credits above grade 9 is required. The diploma is granted after successful completion of 2 semesters of college with an average grade of "C" or better, or if the student has earned sufficient credits to graduate from high school.

   Students may also graduate under a program of job entry when students are age 16 or older with 2 full years and 10 credits of completed high school, to include demonstrated job proficiency or 1 credit in a vocational course. A cooperative agreement among parent, teacher and employer also is required.

   Students may also graduate under a plan of "student performance" developed by each district.
4. A second year of math or of science is required. (Total 3 units)
5. Special programs may be arranged for students with special needs. Credit for part-time work experience may be granted.
6. Instruction required in American patriotism and representative government, honesty, justice, moral courage, humane education, safety education, effects of alcohol and narcotics, conservation, and consumer education.

   Credit may be granted by examination of students studying independently when such study is approved by school officials.
7. Two "majors" of 3 units each and two "minors" of 2 units each are required. Students must attend 7 semesters to graduate.
8. Instruction in physiology and hygiene to include the effects of alcohol and narcotics is required.
9. Credit may be granted by successful course work, by a validating examination, or by approved independent study.

The governing body of the local school district may set alternative requirements of 17 units or more, provided that 1 unit of U.S. history is taught and 1/2 unit of U.S. government. These requirements must be in agreement with state-wide educational goals set by the State Board.

10. Credit in elective courses may be granted by examination. School districts may formulate "experimental" programs for review by the state.
11. Two additional required units may be selected from among communication skills, social studies, mathematics and science. Instruction required in use and abuse of drugs, in physiology and hygiene, and in the Constitution of the United States. Credit is granted for advanced study evaluated by standardized achievement tests, for approved off-campus instruction, and for approved travel.
12. Credit may be granted for special programs such as Job Corps, Upward Bound, and Armed Forces Schools, or for work-study and college level courses.
13. Credit allowed by examination, for off-campus experiences or from approved correspondence schools.
14. Credit allowed by examination, for independent study, and for community service activities.
15. Credit allowed as in footnote 13.
16. For State Regents endorsement, one year mathematics, passing Regents examination in English and social studies, and a total of 18 units. Safety education required.
17. Only 2 units of music and 1 unit of typewriting may be allowed for graduation. Students must attend school 160 days a year with exceptions for reason of health, finance, or experimental curricula.
18. Not more than 2 units of credit for graduation may be granted for physical education, yearbook, newspaper, or audiovisual education, and not more than 4 units of credit shall be granted for music laboratory classes.
19. Requirements begin with the class of 1978.
    Each student's transcript of record shall indicate the degree to which he or she has demonstrated the knowledge and skills to function in: (1) Personal Development, (2) Social Responsibility, and (3) Career Development. The local district shall identify the performance indicators. Credit by examination is allowed. A certificate of competence may be awarded to those students who have completed some, but not all, graduation requirements.
    Four years of attendance in grades 9 - 12 is required unless waived by the local district. Local districts may also execute these options:
    1. Decide whether or not to allow off-campus experiences toward the earning of credits
    2. Allow college credit alternative
    3. Allow independent study
    4. Allow work experience
    5. Allow credit by examination for waiving required course areas
    6. Allow credit by examination for waiving required course areas and granting credit
    7. Decide whether or not to waive some on campus attendance requirements
    8. Decide whether or not to have pre-tests for entering 9th graders
    9. Decide whether or not to award certificates of competency.
    10. Decide whether or not to exceed
        a. Minimum course offerings
        b. Clock-hour lengths
        c. Competency categories
20. Credit granted by examination for independent study, in correspondence schools, or in other manner approved by the Superintendent of Public

Instruction. Any pupil of 14 years or older not benefiting from the regular instruction may, with the approval of parents and principal, have an individualized schedule as long as it includes instruction in citizenship and communications skills.

21. Instruction in physiology and hygiene, to include the effects of alcohol and narcotics, is required.
22. Examination required on the U.S. Constitution. No more than 6 units toward graduation may be allowed for summer school and/or correspondence courses, and/or adult education programs.
23. Local Board of Education may develop alternative requirements with the permission of the State Commissioner of Education. 16 units required for graduation until class of 1978. Students must obtain an approved attendance and conduct record prior to graduation.
24. Credit allowed as in footnote 13. Attendance required for 6 semesters.
25. Local districts may submit individual plans for approval to the State Department of Education.
26. For college-bound students additional units are required as follows: Science - 1, and Mathematics - 1. A maximum of 20 semester hours of performing music, only 10 above grade 9, may be counted for graduation.